

# Mediation Month-March



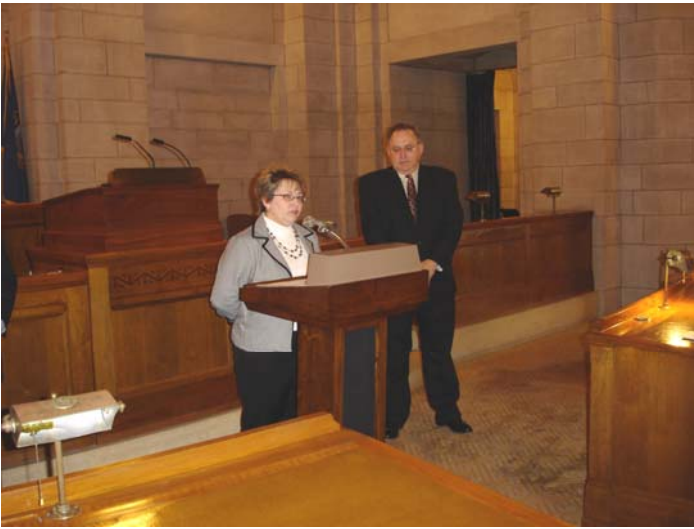
*Debora Brownyard (front right) is joined by Supreme Court Justice Michael McCormack (back right), Governor Heineman (center) and mediation supporters (left to right) Rachel Lempka, Kelly Phipps, Carl Eskridge, Jim Gordon (back) and Linda Sanchez-Masi.*

## March is Declared Mediation Month in Nebraska

The Nebraska Supreme Court Office of Dispute Resolution kicks off the celebration of mediation month in Nebraska with a proclamation signing by Governor Dave Heineman at the State Capitol this morning, March 21. The ceremony, attended by mediation professionals and supporters, recognizes more than 14 years of conflict resolution services provided by the Nebraska Office of Dispute Resolution, ODR-approved mediation centers, their affiliate mediators and other public and private mediators throughout the state.

Arranging the kick-off was Ms. Debora Brownyard, Esq., Office of Dispute Resolution and Rural Court Services Director. "This recognition is an honor for mediation supporters across the State," said Brownyard. "With mediation services, Nebraska's mediation centers strive to help people achieve and maintain self determination in their lives, preserve relationships between people and eliminate the strain of avoidable litigation."

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*Debra Brownyard (at podium) with Supreme Court Justice Michael McCormack (right) speaks of the importance of the role of mediation and alternative dispute resolution in today's legal community.*



*Lincoln Attorney and Dispute Resolution Advisory Council Chair, James Gordon receives a copy of the Governor's resolution from Debra Brownyard.*

For more information,  
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Or the Mediation Center in  
your area:

<http://court.nol.org/odr/about/roster.pdf>



Mediation is a process which brings disputing parties together to resolve their conflicts and to produce solutions which are acceptable and beneficial to everyone involved. It is a structured but informal process conducted by one or more qualified neutral individuals who assist the parties work toward agreement.

A typical mediation session lasts from one to two hours and is especially effective in resolving disputes in areas such as labor/management, neighborhood conflicts, family matters, divorce, consumer/merchant, landlord/tenant and small claims cases. Mediation offers participants a less expensive, less combative and less time-consuming alternative to litigation.

The Supreme Court of Nebraska established the Office of Dispute Resolution following the Legislature's passage of the Nebraska Dispute Resolution Act of 1991. The office was established to provide information, education and program development guidance and works to integrate alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services within local courts.

The Office of Dispute Resolution oversees six approved non-profit mediation centers:

- ▶ The Resolution Center, Beatrice
- ▶ The Mediation Center, Lincoln
- ▶ Nebraska Justice Center, Fremont
- ▶ Concord Center, Omaha
- ▶ Central Mediation Center, Kearney
- ▶ Center for Conflict Resolution, Scottsbluff

An 11-member ODR Advisory Council, comprised of Nebraska Supreme Court-appointed representatives from the District Court Judges Association, the County Court Judges Association, the Nebraska State Bar Association, social workers, mental health professionals, educators and others, together with the ODR and the mediation centers, constitutes Nebraska's coordinated system for providing easily accessible and competent dispute resolution services for all Nebraskans. ◇



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